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E I D Y L L I A:

O R,

M I S C E L L A N E O U S P O E M S,

On losing MILTON : an Ode. To ADVERSITY : an Ode.
To ISABELLA : an Ode. PHILOCLES : a Monody.
The FAIR MATRON : an Ode. The MUSES triumphant
VIRTUE's Expostulation: an Ode. over VENUS : a Tale.

With a HINT to the BRITISH POETS.

*Stulta est clementia, cum tot ubique
Vatibus occurras, perituræ parcere chartæ.*

*Thou sweet Inspirer of immortal breasts!
Freedom! descend and genius o'er our isle
Impregnated with emulation's fire,
Thy genius shed, like showers from bursting clouds.*

By the AUTHOR of Animadversions upon the Reverend Doctor
BROWN's three essays on the Characteristicks ; and of a Criti-
cism on the late Reverend Mr HOLLAND's Sermons.

M^r. Andrews

E D I N B U R G H:

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M,DCC,LVII.

A

HINT to the BRITISH POETS.

ONE constituent of poetry is description ; which is of three kinds. *First*, of objects as they appear to exist in fact ; which is common to the Poet with the Historian, and may therefore be termed historical description. For determining the justness of this kind, there lies an appeal from all authorities whatsoever to the things described.

SECONDLY, of objects that were never known to exist, but similar to those that we see do exist ; which kind permit me to call imaginary description. For determining the excellence of this kind, the last appeal lies to nature, experience, fact, and the common notions of consistency, propriety, truth.

THIRDLY, of objects that never at all exist but in the poet's imagination, as HOMER's Gods and Goddeffes, the Muses, Fairies, Genii of places, the Virtues and Vices personified, and all the other branches of the poetical machinery, which I beg leave to call creative description. If a poet chuses to adopt a machinery already established, it stands in the place of nature ; and to it the appeal lies for the justness of his descriptions. Some liberty indeed he certainly ought to take in improving upon it by his own

own invention ; tho' exactly how much is not easy to say. Neither would it be safe to pronounce concerning the excellence of any new or established machinery by general rules ; how conspicuous soever it may be to almost every one in particular cases. Jove shook his locks, and the earth trembled. God looketh upon the earth, and it trembleth. *He said, Let there be light, and there was light.*

*Eve's heavenly form——o'eraw'd
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent, it brought.
That space, &c.*

THESE descriptions of majesty, power, and the workings of the heart, which we never cease to admire, tho' not in such instances as ever fall under human observation, do yet bear a near analogy to human things ; so near, that I begin to be out of humour with the distinction of the imaginary and creative kinds, and am willing to retain only the former of these terms, including in it the idea of both : and if you will also include in it the historical, we shall take the word *imagery* in its common acceptation ; which I called one constituent of Poetry, but very improperly ; for it is rather its essence, its soul and body : so that the more or less any composition has of it, it has the more or less of Poetry. XENOPHON'S institution of CYRUS, which is in the loose attire of easy prose, is a part of it as essentially poetical, as any that his
model

model HOMER has to boast of, tho' there is scarce one fact or speech, which I dare assert was never done or spoken. And if, upon this account, it should be doubted, whether he is a Poet or Historian; this very doubt would determine me to pronounce him a Poet. In the first of PLATO's *Republics*, the description of THRASIMACHUS, which is the only thing I admire in it, is strictly poetical, and enough to raise the envy of an ARISTOPHANES.

BUT tho' Imagery be both the soul and body of Poetry, yet if it would animate and give a grace to the whole of a composition, it ought not, (no more than a fine woman, who would shew herself to the best advantage,) to appear naked or loose. Certain ornaments it admits of as naturally becoming, and many more possibly our fancy may demand to render it agreeable.

ONE ornament we are agreed, I mean all mankind in all ages and nations of the world are agreed, there is, and that is measure; which we think so necessary, that without it Poetry generally loses the very name. We are so agreed in demanding that ornament; because it is not fancy, but is founded upon this certain principle of human nature, the sense of harmony, and the tones of the human voice being expressive of the passions, or correspondent to the velocity, slowness, delicacy, &c. of the things described. If this correspondence and expression be preserved, together with that harmony, which gives a certain freedom, agility
and

and voluntary motion to the thoughts, whatever the language be, my fancy is fully satisfied. Whether harmony requires, that the measure be the same throughout a composition, may well be doubted.

HERE, if the Reader will let a joke go free, (as travellers usually do for their mutual relief upon a blind and tedious road, and so methinks should friendly criticks, when all alike bewildered in any labyrinth of controversy ;) I can hardly forbear wishing there was a form of poetical government established according to PLATO's *Utopia*. Only instead of an Aristocracy, I would have it to be a Monarchy, and myself for a while the Monarch. My first edict should be, what the sweet THEOCRITUS suggested to me in a pleasant dream last night, tho' troubled betimes with certain unmusical and strange voices, as of some Billingsgate rabble, heard, as they seemed to be, from afar, and, as he informed me, frowning at my childish attention to them, periodically. By his advice, be it hereby prohibited to use any other metre than the heroic, on pain of my displeasure, because this has been proved both by the antient Poets and our own to admit of the greatest variety, while yet it preserves the harmony, of numbers, so as to be easily adapted to every species of poetry, from the highest sublime, down to very chit-chat. If indeed, in violation of my edict, any presumptuous pen shall attempt a particular measure, provided it be every where peculiarly adapted to the spirit, and this of course the same in one intire stanza as another,
and

and in the first, second, third, &c. lines of any one stanza as in the correspondent lines of any other, his punishment shall be remitted : perhaps too I may intercede with APOLLO to crown his son.

We are apt, I own, to be pleased with the abstract uniformity and variety of sounds : abstract, I say, and independent upon the sense and spirit. But then it is only the ear that is tickled, neither the imagination nor the heart are assisted. And whether they shall be assisted or otherwise by that harmony, depends upon its correspondence or contrariety to the sense and spirit. Thus, if the numbers are quick when the spirit is gay, or slow when it is melancholy, they are assisting : but if quick when it is melancholy, or slow when it is gay, the ear and the soul counteract each other. This is universally confessed. Yet if there be no spirit at all, since in this case that contrariety cannot happen, we are apt to be so well pleased with the verses, as to pronounce them poetry. Some indeed in such a case may not like them the more for that melodiousness, save only as it renders them a more pleasant opiate. But these are few. And as to others, it is only their ear, that pronounces that honourable sentence, not their imagination nor their heart. And that neither myself nor my good people might be such corrupted judges, particularly that none of my dearly beloved cousins, the Poets, might, from a too pious veneration for their immediate predecessors, ever be with them enchanted by the magick of harmonious sounds into an affection

tation of some grovelling witticisms and almost utter forgetfulness of the divine and proper sentiments of Poetry : to save them I say from this degradation, not unlike that which ULYSSES's crew suffered when decoyed by the melody of the SYRENS, is the principal intention of my edict, as it will also be of my concluding inquiry. For of all kinds of metre, that were ever invented by my British Subjects, the heroic seems to have the least share of abstract harmony. Yet they will not murmur at the restriction, if they allow me, that there is no species of Poetry to which it may not be adapted.

BUT let what will become of my edict, so my countrymen unanimously adopt this axiom, That by far the greatest part, if not the whole of the excellence, there is even in the harmony of versification, results from the assistance it gives to the sense and spirit of a poem : and that we ought to try by the same criterion the merit of every other fancied ornament, particularly that of rhyme.

ERE then we can justly fix the degree of excellence there is in rhyme, we must inquire, What assistance gives it to the sense and spirit ? Whether gives it more, if two or three lines terminate in the same sound successively, or at some distance from each other by the intervention of others, which in the same manner terminate in the same sound, either successively, or at some distance from each other by the intervention of the former in return ? or, lastly,

lastly, does it not give most of all, if the middle and end of the same line echo to each other ?

In determining these very important questions, I must not overlook the authority of BETTY, an old servant of my Mother's, about eighteen years ago. As I was reading one winter-evening in Mr POPE's *Essay on man*, my mother observing her very attentive, asked her, Now, BETTY, how do ye like it ? Why, Madam, I cannot tell well. It is above me. But I think it is very pretty. It, I know not what you call it, like our Psalm-book, at the end of every line. It rhymes I suppose you mean, BETTY. Ay, Sir, nicely. It comes as pat as my old shoe. I wonder how he made it rhyme so nicely. Thus rhyming it seems caught BETTY's attention, as it did mine too, tho' in a different manner. For to her it gave pleasure ; to me disgust. But in whatever manner it affect the hearer, it catches the attention, and of course so far diverts it from the sense and spirit : to which therefore it is by no means assisting.

I have often been foolish enough to wonder, why the periodical reiteration of the same sound should ever have been so generally agreeable, gravely inquiring about the cause : as if no sort of epidemical taste could befall the literary world but what is founded upon principles of reason. Once, we know, acrosticks, conundrums, &c. were the taste ; which is easily accounted for, as being in the long reign of scholastic darkness. But this is the

age of knowledge and refinement, and requires therefore some other account of the prevalence of the taste in question.

1st, WE are all naturally pleased with uniformity, and some even when variety would be more agreeable to a well formed judgment, as it certainly happens often in other cases at least, if not in that under consideration.

2^{dly}, WE are naturally pleased with the ingenious acquisition of an end, be it what it will.

3^{dly}, STILL more with the ingenious acquisition of two ends at the same time ; which two in the question before us, are Sense and Rhyme.

4^{thly}, AGAIN still more, if the prosecution of the one seemed naturally to thwart with that of the other : for this enhances the difficulty, and consequently the ingenuity.

THESE are the best accounts I can offer for BETTY's pleasure. She admired how pretty it was, how pat the rhyme came, and wondered how he could make it rhyme so nicely. But happy the POET who has wherewith to excite a better admiration ; so as to put an end to the former sort ; transporting the mind in such an enthusiasm, as to engross the whole of its attention, and hinder even its perception of such a circumstance, as the periodical reiteration of the same sound. As when having read this line,

Lent heaven a parent to the poor and me,

BETTY

BETTY cried, Pray Mr ROBERT, I beg my Mistress's pardon, will you be so good to read that line again. Well, BETTY, but I must read the line before it too, or else you will not feel how sweetly it rhymes. No matter for that, Sir, I like that line by itself. I wonder, says she, if it was his father or mother. His mother. She was a good woman, I will warrant.

ANOTHER cause I might have assigned for the preference of rhyme to blank verse, is, That usually the period is shorter and of a more uniform length ; its several members more frequently explanatory of each other, and any nervous or uncommon word more frequently softened by a synonymous one. All which excellencies do not a little contribute to perspicuity ; and perspicuity is always agreeable : a maxim of considerable importance, which yet none are so apt to forget as the Poets, tho' in none, not even in the Mathematician, is the observance of it more indispensably necessary.

Two causes more occur to me, namely, Habit and the Association of ideas, commonly contracted by those who are much accustomed to read rhyme, according as the poetry is good or bad. And what wonder, if in the former case, the indiscriminating vulgar slide into an affection for rhyme, on account of the good company it has kept : Or if, in the latter case, when the Poet himself is deserted of the Muses, his readers are also abandoned to the admiration

miration of rhyme for its own sake, having nothing else before them that they can admire.

As to what is often urged, That rhyme is agreeable, because it is a help to the memory : this advantage is no part of the pleasure immediately attending the enjoyment of a good poem ; no more than the prospect of any profits accidentally arising from the composition, is a part of the pleasure which the Poet had in the first conception of it ; or, lest I should not be understood, no more than the prospect of any profits arising from an honest action is a part of the pleasure, which an honest man as such has in doing it.

NEITHER can I admit another argument, advanced by some modest abettors of rhyme, That it gives a graceful heightening at least to the burlesque kind of poetry. That it admirably heightens the burlesque, I own, cannot be denied : but I must flatly deny that burlesque is any kind of poetry, unless I would also deny that there is any difference betwixt a buffoon, who professes to personate whatever is the reverse of nature in whim, oddity, and nonsense, and an actor, who exhibits truth and nature. But let the Poets, and all whom it shall concern, be warned, that if a grave and truly poetical sentiment ever demean itself, by assuming the ridiculous habit of burlesque, it doth as certainly forfeit the happy character, as ever did chaste Lady in her disguise at a masquerade.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER argument I have sometimes heard, is, that our own and other modern tongues, not having the rich variety of terminations, which we justly admire in the ancient languages, want harmony, and so require rhyme as a supply. For my own part, I frankly confess to have such an agreeable prejudice in favour of my mother-tongue, as well as my mother-country, that I cannot allow the former to want harmony, any more than the latter a just balance of power in its three constituent estates ; nor can I wish the constitution of either to be transformed into a resemblance, or any sort of connection with such of our neighbours, as may, for ought I know, want our harmony, but certainly do our happy balance. But, allowing I think too highly of my mother-tongue, it is impossible to suspect my ear of thickness, for not perceiving how the want of variety and harmony is supplied by the periodical reiteration of the same sound ; unless it be sense to say, that I supply a beggar's wants, if I rob him of his satchel and its fragments.

THE most important use of rhyme is, That, which well considered, may perhaps point out its rise, and how it came to be dignified with the name. In certain particular measures commonly used in odes and psalms, where all the lines or couplets are exactly of the same metre, the hearer, unless very attentive and singularly quick in numbering, could not perceive when the stanza was compleated without the periodical reiteration of the same sound : which reiteration therefore became as necessary as the variety

variety of metre in the several lines of an ancient stanza. And from this conjunction of the uniform metre in the several lines or couplets with the periodical reiteration of the same sound, which was thought to answer the end of variety, from this conjunction I say the stanzas seem to have been called rhymes; rhyme properly signifying the harmony that proceeds from the conjunction of uniformity with variety of sounds. And in process of time came that false rhyme to be gradually introduced into other particular measures, where there was not the same necessity, and at last into the heroic, by some who did not know the reason of its first invention. Thus we see it happens to the laws of poetry, as well as to those often of religion and the state, that how good soever they might be in themselves originally, they come to be misapplied and converted into grievances, by such as do not consider, or never knew the prime reason of their institution. This is the most probable account I can offer for the rise and prevalence of this modern taste.

THE result of my inquiry is, That the periodical reiteration of the same sound is not a natural expression of veneration, love, gravity, sorrow, raillery, nor of any other sense or passion whatsoever, nor of velocity, slowness, delicacy, or the like; that therefore it does not in any degree heighten either the sense and spirit, or the harmony of the numbers: and that whether it has any abstract and essential agreeableness, which is a question of experience, I shall only answer for one, I do not feel it, no more than

than I do the agreeableness of the rhyming antithesis, much affected by some of our pious prose-writers in the last century, who are more excusable, as not pretending to the majesty of poetry; yet will not deny it to be agreeable to other people, not only to vulgar readers, but sometimes to the poets themselves, who, like the men of an unnatural appetite fatally bent upon their own ruin, fancy a deliciousness in that which endangers the very being of a tolerable genius, or who, more properly it may be, like the men of a healthy appetite, delight in that which they find to be the main source of their fame and opulence, and literally speaking their staff of life. Whether this severity is generally deserved, or like most of our modern satyr is only the casual fling of a blind, licentious and prostituted wit, is a question of fact: And to fact I willingly appeal, to stand or fall by its evidence, provided the Critical Gentlemen upon the jury, who shall pronounce upon it, be such as are competent judges in the case.

LEAVING it therefore undetermined, whether rhyme is a beauty or not, yet considering what can never be disputed, namely, the vast variety there is of other poetical beauties, with their proportionable importance, this at least we may surely advance without offence, That it is essential to a good Poet to have through his whole piece such a height of sense, spirit, and harmony; that, if he rhyme, his hearer may have something better to employ his attention than the rhyme; and that, if he do not, he may yet have all those real graces which commonly attend rhyme, such

as perspicuity, harmony, moderate length of periods ; and, lastly, that his hearer may easily perceive, as he goes along, when the measure is compleated, I mean, when the line or stanza ends ; except when a just enthusiasm trespasses unawares the common measure, running out into a more harmonious voluntary, like a flaming comet that breaks the order of some inferior system, setting fire to a guilty planet, destined to destruction.

IF the reader, in pity to a treacherous memory, will dispense with method, I shall consider what I lately heard a Gentleman further alledge in defence of rhyme ; which is the more worthy of our notice, both as it seems to proceed from that spirit without which age itself is no longer honourable, nor as I should think truly happy, and as it is supported by the authority of most of our Schoolmasters. We ought to have a regard, says he, for youth, and accommodate ourselves to their capacities : for JUVENAL says, *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*. And whereas it is proper to try their genius very early in every way, and so in the poetical among the rest, for its natural inclination cannot be too soon discovered : and whereas moreover poetry, according to your notion of it, is too sublime an art for children to attempt, we must therefore take a middle way, and be content with obliging them betimes to make Hexameters and Pentameters in Latin, and also smooth elegant rhymes in English, the former with the help of their *Gradus ad Parnassum*, and the latter with that of BYSSÉ's *Art of Poetry*, two very useful books if the great
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men, Sir, of our Universities do not mistake. Besides that many there are of riper age, who, tho' they have certainly a very fine poetical turn, would yet never dare exercise it without that indulgence. And some of our poets, who are very much of your opinion and mine about this matter, are not only excusable, but commendable for their condescension in complying with the vulgar taste, for which yet a great deal might be said after all. Not unlikely, Sir. And as to those, who durst hardly make the attempt without the indulgence of rhyming, I could readily excuse most of them. But some I cannot forgive for their excess of modesty. Had I their fertile invention, methinks, I would employ it to some better purpose, than that of finding out the whole variety of rhymes in our mother-tongue, which to me looks like discovering a parent's nakedness. So much am I ashamed for her, or rather for her idle and impious children, when I hear them stammering, as in derision, with the frequent reiteration of the same sound.

As to the Gentlemen you spoke of last : I am not, I assure you, Sir, I am not naturally suspicious, nor did I ever love to be satyrical. Yet, I own, when you so candidly mentioned their condescension, you reminded me of the apology, a young tradesman once made me for appearing above his circumstances ; I do not do it to please myself, says he, but that the world, which, you know, Sir, loves show, may have, Sir, a higher opinion of my
C stock

stock in trade, which gets one credit. But allowing it to be a real condescension in them; ill fares it with the republic of letters, when the rabble gives law, and worse than slaves are they, that stoop so miserably upon any consideration. Popular fame only with all its temporal emoluments, be the reward of those, whether poets or others, who seek not in the first, middle and last place, to approve themselves to their own judgment, or to what they are not ashamed to confess to be a better authority.

As to what you so well observed, (and, Sir, I congratulate you upon it,) that we ought to have a tender respect, and even veneration for our Youth, who, we pray, may hereafter greatly excel their fathers, or who, we ought to fear, will shame us, if they shall have nothing for which to thank and revere our memory: this is most heartily granted. But, Sir, may not the end you mention, that of knowing a boy's genius, be obtained by means, at once more easy to the scholars, and more certain to the master tho' of no uncommon sagacity? For as they gradually conquer the difficulties of the ancient languages in reading the immortal models of history, eloquence, poetry, &c. their nature I should imagine will at times break out, and shew, in spite of all their levity, which it is inclined to pursue. And if ever the Youth appears to be highly pleased with what he reads, if ever he is ready to wish he was himself the author, but blushes and trembles at the ambitious thought, or by turns now pants with hope, now languishes because he dares not hope; if he is observed, either of his own motion,

tion, or at some gentle hint, to take up his pen, or burn what he has written because the execution does not come up to his idea : there wants, Sir, nothing but encouragement. Let nothing be left undone, that may keep him from despair. Despair ! that wide and hideous grave, where lies many a noble genius, that, after a thousand struggles for life and immortality, its strength at last exhausted, sinks into hated yet voluntary oblivion, and strives, but strives in vain, to soothe remorse with the opiate of sensual pleasure. From the anguish of such a distracted mind, GOD preserve our BRITISH Youth. May they be taught to practise temperance and due industry, a brave indifference to the world, and an honest self-dependence : and, far from affecting popularity, be fired into a nobler ambition by studying day and night the best transcripts of Nature ancient and modern, but especially their common Model herself, whose scenes are infinitely various, and can never be exhausted by the human pencil. So may they, (for thus only can they,) arrive to that full perception of Truth and Beauty, which is necessary to those, who would excel in any of the ingenious arts. That full perception of Truth and Beauty : which fixes the Painter's eye, enlivens his fancy, and emboldens his pencil : which informs the Statue into life and action : which varies, governs and impassionates the Composer's harmony ; and impowers him to becalm the soul into an Elysium, or rouse all its finer faculties into that pleasing perturbation, which, as exceeding the common felicity of mortals, may be justly termed enthusiasm.

That

That full perception of Truth and Beauty : which, abstracting the enlarged Theorist from this material world, and even from the body, charms and refines him into pure intelligence. That full perception : which dictates to the modest Orator, and conducts him, imperceptibly to himself and audience, along the easy scale of soft persuasion up to an absolute authority, and force o'er the mind fix'd as a statue in deep attention ; and which lastly invests the Poet with all his essential majesty and simplicity, impregnates, and instructs him to communicate that love of his country, and that love of liberty, which in the sons of Britain are the same ; I say, instructs him to communicate, from the fulness of his own heart, those divine principles of true Patriotism, Virtue and Piety, in which POETRY, however she may otherwise amuse herself sometimes, places always her principal delight, with which she ever was, and ever will be inspirited, when she rises to her fullest glory, and with which is wing'd, when she makes her boldest excursions into the invisible and eternal worlds.

E I D Y L L I A:

Upon losing MILTON'S PARADISE LOST, at LUSS situate upon LOCH-LOMOND at the foot of BEN-LOW-MAN and a group of other vast mountains:

AN ODE.

FOOL that I was! My MILTON lost!
Old HOMER's youngest son!

LUSS! be for ever sunk beneath
BEN's horrors pil'd around.

Sun's 'livening ray ne'er pierce thy gloom.
Thy hideous deep be drain'd.

Fishes to devilish snakes be turn'd:
Boatman to CERBERUS.

Mouth of the hellish gulf be thou:
Its mortal damp thy air.

All o'er thy plains Vulcanos thick
Their burning sands disgorge.

Birds never warble chearful note;
Nor roam the humming bee.

Herds never graze, nor sheep, nor goats;
Nor human voice be heard.

Craggs

Crag's other echo ne'er repeat
Than dismal Furies' yell.

MERCURY laugh'd ; and jeering cried,
I MILTON from thee filch'd.

So did APOLLO bid ; and, see !
For thee a laurel holds.

To the blooming ISABELLA : An ODE.

CLOE you know, have heard her talk.
I'll tell you what she thinks, my Dear.

Oh ! for the man, deserves my love :
Me, like Queen JUNO who adores,
Like VENUS, in a rapture eyes.
His fixed gaze, or downward look,
Or starting wildness speaks desire.
Yet fears t' approach ; or at my feet
His passion pleads, and in my eye
Like trembling prisoner seeks his fate.
I deign a smile. Intranc'd in love
He rivals JOVE in JUNO's arms.
I frown. He lightning-blasted shrinks.
My horrors drive his soul aghast.
Again I smile. He thanks his Stars,
And me his Goddess for the grace.

I on the rack of my disdain
 May torture him a thousand times :
 As oft he whines, and vows, and prays,
 And readmitted thinks me kind.

Him would I love : o'er him wou'd rule,
 As, JUNO ! thou the heart of JOVE.
 Such husband, oh ! dear HYMEN ! give.
 Nay do. And soon. Or I despair.

Let her despair, and warning be
 To you, my blooming ISABEL !
 In beauty's sunshine as you sail,
 All gay and pleasant ! to beware
 The rocks and shelves of hated pride.

Upon seeing a fair MATRON with her Husband and
 Daughter at the Theatre ; in answer to a young
 Officer, who very wittily broke out, *Venus ! by God :*
 An ODE.

V E N U S, d'ye say ? For beauty not unlike.

But where's, my friend ! the wish-inspiring glance ?
 The ambiguous aspect, lure and rack of love ?
 Pale, flushing languish ? Or the scornful frown,
 Ending repentant in a luscious smile ?

No.

No. Virtue inspiriting that noble form
Than VENUS ever boasted more divine
Sure has on earth descended to reveal
Herself. How lovely ! Made thus visible !
That shape how just ! In that complection, fair
As innocence unspotted, sweetly glow
The mingled delicacies. In her eye
Sparkles her soul. Her features and her mien
High dignity yet goodness more express ;
All-beautifying and immortal grace.
And in her gesture each new attitude
Borrowing from her Guardian-Angel's Form
Still some new charm, as Iris from the Sun
The varying beauties of the light, reflects.
In crouded theatre by all admir'd,
With eyes untwinkling as in rapture fix'd,
Unconscious and compos'd she looks around :
Or on her Lord, or their Joint Image smiles,
Fair fruit and blessing of connubial love.

Such, Holy Matrimony ! are thy joys !
Ye blooming Fair ! like her, you too admire,
Beauty and Virtue ever think the same.
One with your love, all with your goodness bless :
And bloom immortal in a lovely Race.

Virtue's

VIRTUE's Expostulation with the BRITISH
POETS: An ODE.

BRITANNIA's Genius! who alone enjoy'st
Fair Liberty well-balanc'd and secure,
Best nurse of arts and sciences divine:
Why dost thou thankless thy poetic fire,
In subjects so unworthy, why mispend?
Satyr, on objects as itself mis-shap'd
Nature's abortions feasting, grins unblest
Fell joy. Pretended Zeal for truth reveal'd,
But with an air and spirit, how reverse!
Monopolizing bounds the Sovereign Grace:
In darkest mystery gropes, yet science vaunts;
And rancour-swollen e'en conscience wou'd enslave.
Romance, that goodly world in vain beheld
With all its gay enlivening scenes around,
Frantic in visionary chaos roams:
Or with some sickly lovetale courts applause,
Transient as the low appetite inflam'd.

What! Have I then no charms? No images
O'er the intellectual creation spread,
To inchant the wandering fancy with delight,
And warm the generous heart? This wide expanse
Of glory see! Where I, the Holy Nine,
Truth, and these Graces, my unnumber'd train,

D

Harmonious

Harmonious moving as the tuneful spheres,
 From the Supream our borrow'd light diffuse
 On spirits elect, as on my Blessed Bards
 Of old or late, prophetic or profane :
 Whom panting I led up PARNASSUS' Height
 Aloft to Fame. Dare you their guide reject ?
 Without me hope to immortalize your name ?
 Me, Universal Nature's boast, the source
 Of Beauty's self. Why then to you estrang'd ?
 Why unadmir'd ? Unsung ? But, BRITONS ! know,
 None Poets are but as by me inspir'd.

VIRTUE's remonstrance, HUME in vision heard :
 Awe-struck awak'd, obey'd, and DOUGLAS sung.

TO ADVERSITY: An ODE.

HOW changeable is Man ! Where now my joys ?
 My wonted ecstasies ? Presumptuous hopes,
 Still on the wing to imaginary bliss,
 Horizon-like still flying as pursued ?
 Where now my admiration of this world,
 Fond as the infant's gaze on spiring flames,
 And with it fled ? Few now are my desires :
 Nor longer feverish ; but, if granted, please,
 Yet, if denied, they ne'er my peace disturb.
 Since doubtful are all mortal good and ill ;

Known

Known only by th' event ourselves ordain,
As Wisdom guides the soul, or Folly drives.
No mildew-fears my enjoyment ever blast,
Nor shall affliction gratitude eraze,
Or cut the nerves of enterprising hope :
And if past remedy my faith pervades
These earthly mists to that All-ruling Love,
Which like the Sun still blesses tho' unseen.
With heart-strings brac'd I now can view serene;
And humbly smile at FORTUNE's mighty threats,
Sweet pity shed, and, whom I can, relieve :
Waiting secure the dawn of heavenly light,
That soon this midnight-darkness shall dispell,
And faith reward with vision more enlarg'd
Of Nature's works. How faultless ! How compleat !
As their Creator God supremely fair !
Eternal ! Infinite ! Yet all are one !
Pure now my pleasures : heart humane and blest :
My hopes immortal. Thanks, Adversity !
Heaven's gentle Angel ! tho' of visage stern,
Whose power all mortals feel, yet few they grace.

PHILOCLÉS;

PHILOCLES: A MONODY.

Scene: The Grove near the High-Church and College of GLASGOW.

WELL. Now my conscious heart is lighter grown
 For PLATO read, as PHILOCLES advis'd:
 With whom, as closely may I Virtue's Mount,
 As from our cloyster'd study oft I climb'd
 This Constitution-Hill, to ope our breasts;
 To brace our nerves, and strengthen inward powers;
 To drink like nectar mid-day's wholesome air;
 To enjoy, all-bleſſing Sun! thy chearful rays
 In center of the blue expanse, or feel
 Thy influence, tho' in flying clouds conceal'd.
 Winter retiring, but by slow degrees,
 As loth its power and horrors to resign:
 Such was the season, when, as now alone,
 I with him often hither came, and us'd
 This way to walk these whistling firs among.
 Here was our path, just here, tho' now o'ergrown;
 Since that, O Friendship! by thy foot untrod.

Since

Since last we here together stood retir'd,
Seven years, seven happy years flew o'er our heads ;
And five years more have I my loss deplor'd,
In learning's maze unguided by his clue.
Ah ! Little did I then, what now I feel,
Expect. Ah ! Little thought this solitude,
To me so grateful then, cou'd e'er become
The cause of heaviness and sighs renew'd.
Why do I foolish hither come so oft,
To stir up by each trivial circumstance,
The sad remembrance, sad yet ever dear,
Of my Instructor and my faithful Friend ?

I recollect
Much of his moralizing on this spot :
None that to forlorn friendship gives relief.
Our eye once that way turn'd, says he, Behold
That Gothic building, emblem, undesign'd
I deem yet just, of Hierarchal Pride :
Which on yon clouded summit looking sat,
Down on the layman's soul as on a worm ;
Who gaping strains his neck, and staring eye,
And trembles at the spire, which to high heaven
Seems reaching, as the Priestly Pow'r rever'd.
Or else with that stupendous weight compar'd
His little cottage, and himself contemns.

Still

Still more the paintings when his eye revolves,
 Or awful vestments of deem'd sanctity ;
 Or organ's solemn sound his sense o'erpow'rs ;
 And other decorations of the arts
 Amusing, then alone to men indulg'd :
 All better science and free thought unknown ;
 Which late, but, God be thank'd ! at last arose,
 And with them sure attendant Gospel-Light
 Unclouded, as now shine thy smiling beams,
 O sun ! Thus he fair Liberty wou'd sing
 Religious, Civil. And for principles,
 So blest ! wou'd oft his generous Father thank,
 And for his Father thank his gracious God.

He left me musing, musing with delight,
 On his not noisy forward party-strains
 Of specious liberty misunderstood :
 But modest, gentle, friendly, and sincere,
 Benevolent to all. He soon return'd.
 I had been scribbling. Pray, Sir ! lend your ear.
 He understood not for my faltering tongue,
 And quivering lips ; then took it, Let me read.
 My chilling fears at his approving smile,
 Blush'd into conscious worth, till then unknown.
 For ne'er wou'd he the embryo-genius crush ;
 He'd, as with parent-bill, pick th' opening shell.

He'd

He'd never snarle, my wildness ne'er deride;
But overlook, or soften as he read:
My fervour check, but, as he check'd, inflame:
My feeble judgment teach to apprehend,
Truth in simplicity how best adorn'd,
Fair Nature loveliest faithfully describ'd.

Rules, how reverse! now my officious Friends
With kindness surfeiting cram down my throat;
Which, like a vomit work, 'till quite disgorg'd:
Vaunted Authority: or varying Taste,
Elaborate, fine, so delicately smooth,
It ne'er the judgment nor the heart disturbs:
Sly Caution whispering, Sir! it may offend.
Best be advis'd. Then take the consequence,
Unknowing of the world, to me ingrate:
Or Slavish Imitation tho' of Greeks;
Whose Names so sacred on thy wide-spread wings,
Thou, Memory! bear'st thro' immortality,
And, fluttering o'er this Island pleas'd, salut'st
Us happy, but for liberty abus'd.
Free as thy person, be thy genius free,
Earth's Envy, my BRITANNIA, Heaven's Delight!
The world is boundless. Nor has all its scenes,
Nor ever will the human pencil draw.
Bold Freedom's mighty Spirit uncontroul'd,

In bards of heav'n or earth, prolific works,
 Sure as the Genial Sun, the same effects
 For ever. Beauty's fresh perpetual streams
 Still flow as from an inexhausted source,
 To bathe the glowing fancy in new delight.
 See ! These my Sons ! I mean not to o'erawe.
 Mark well their steps. Be reverent. Yet pursue.
 Than copy servile, rather emulate.
 Fear not by your ambition to offend.
 For Fathers love to see their Sons excel.

Ah ! Now,

My faithful Friend ! I feel my fatal loss.
 What death denies, wou'd fancy cou'd supply ;
 Thy presence with me as when real, to catch
 Thy modesty, thy firmness, gentle fire :
 As when we rising here together stood
 To take, as I do now, my last farewell.
 Thou did'st invoke this solitary grove,
 Yon sacred place, where to reside you love,
 Long may you love, ye Muses ever blest !
 Farewel, this peaceful happy scene, farewell !
 Not forward inclination me at least
 Into the world, but filial duty calls ;
 Or duty's inclination sweetly draws.
 What we have learn'd, oh ! may we ne'er forget !

May

May we be ever learning, tho' employ'd
In busy scenes to study less benign !
For Science, like the Soul, is ever free,
Not bound by charters, nor to place confin'd.
Nor do ye, Muses ! on yon top alone
Up that steep brow above our ken abide :
(Or we in never-ending sighs despair :)
But sweetly deck the flowery plain below
At your PARNASSUS' Foot ; nor there alone.
Of rural seats and fountains not asham'd,
You visit, wheresoe'er pure heart invokes.
Nor as we hope e'en palaces decline,
But bless the world with men, yourselves inspire.
From hence, but not from you, wou'd we depart.
Desert not us, nor fly our wish'd embrace.
Oh ! May some spark of your celestial fire
With love of virtue our young hearts inflame ;
And howsoever distant still unite.
Some Genius too we wou'd. How else admire
Your beauties shou'd we, or your pleasures taste ?
Whatever portion, more or less, you deign,
As you command shall ever be improv'd :
And if Sincerity might swear, we'd swear.
Increase our portion then : since not our hearts
For wealth or pleasure pant, or wide renown.
Other attachments dear that wish extort.

Much to my Father I, to Mothers both,
 To Brothers and to Sisters much we owe.
 Shall senseless earth be grateful to his toil?
 Shall his paternal orchards, or fair trees
 Of his own planting, bear him fruit? I none?
 Might he but ever say, I thank thee, Son;
 Their anxious pains our Mothers ne'er repent;
 Nor none, who love us, ever be ashamed;
 This, for more happiness we cannot crave.

Such pious strains I heard, with what delight!
 Yet did not thank him; cou'd not. Pulse alone
 High-beating everlasting friendship swore.
 Yes, everlasting: nor did I reflect,
 That he was mortal. Else nor then my joy,
 Nor grief at LEEDYATE else, had been extreme.
 Me, there on friendship's happiness intent,
 Delightful theme! in hope of my reward
 His generous ear to please, the news surpriz'd.
 Down drop'd my trembling pen: nor since resum'd.
 Scarce, what I'd written, cou'd I more believe.
 Now I may stay at home. My summer-jaunts,
 Said I, for health, instruction now are o'er.
 Past joys or griefs, how painful to review!

As some to BATH, I to my Friend retir'd,
 An annual visit paid: found other smiles,

Than

'Than they I deem, more constant, more sincere.
We chatted, walk'd, or wou'd together read ;
With critical severity chastise,
Truth undisguis'd, and freedom unreserv'd.
Sometimes he'd say, This, Sir ! I had from you.
'Twas by reflection then all from yourself.
United so in heart and sentiment,
All property was lost. Nor was the praise,
Of what one wrote, to th' other e'er denied.

'Twas long the mournful visit I defer'd,
In hope to find Parental Grief allay'd.
Not salutation's smile I then receiv'd,
As wont, but friendly welcome and compos'd,
Chearfully grave. Few were our words, and low ;
Clock's pendulum too often heard : And, ah !
How slower now, than once, the heavy time
It measures out, in moments all perceiv'd !

Next morn desir'd to play, I'd brought no lute.
But play I must on one, by chance I'd left.
Than sinless Infant's smile, than Beauty's bloom,
Youth's gaiety, or Man's meridian strength,
I, modest aged chearful Piety
For due respect too thankful, more admire.
And loth to play, yet to oblige inclin'd,

As Easy Friendship easily o'ercome.
 I'd stole a grace. She turning drop'd a tear :
 Then smil'd complacence, Sir ! so sung my Son.

DAMÆTAS from his morning-care return'd :
 We took a walk. In silence sad, or sounds
 Of chitchat forc'd scarce inwardly perceiv'd,
 Well as we cou'd suppressing we conceal'd
 His anguish he, and I my grief, reviv'd
 By every little circumstance around.

Full-loaden then the pear-tree ; where reclin'd
 Us'd PHILOCLES and I together read.
 When first he brought me to his favourite tree,
 For so he call'd it, Taste this pear, how sweet,
 Not over luscious ; nor on palate leaves
 A sickly relish. Such should pleasure be.
 This moral on it smiling he ingrafts,

Here as we pass'd. He calmly look'd around ;
 Now on our wonted seat ; then on the tree :
 Then upward turn'd his eye. I blush'd at sight
 Of so much piety. He sigh'd : and seem'd,
 As he wou'd speak. Now shall my longing ear,
 Said I, his consolations blest partake :
 With hanging head long listen'd ; nothing heard :

Then

Then stole a glance : and knew not whether more
To pity or congratulate. He sigh'd ;
But sigh'd, as Saints for immortality :
Nor spoke ; save what the scene, a Father's look,
Silence, in deep solemnity combin'd,
Grief-healing strains to me like these address'd.

See this, of all that in my orchard grow,
The fairest, my own planting, fragrant shade
Wide-spreading once o'er its young Lord my Son.
It stands. It flourishes. From waxen bole,
It shoots thick branches upwards and around :
And earlier fruit than common bore, still bears.
Beneath its cumbrous bounty, how it bends !
Where's He then, we with sweet solicitude
And still-increasing satisfaction nurs'd ?
Who, with whatever joy can bless parental hearts,
All our fond labours dutiful o'erpaid.
In him I strength and prudence felt renew'd.
Nor fear'd I age, nor life's infirmities.
But he is gone. And Age ! How fast it comes !
With its infirmities, how hideous grown !
Ah ! such a Son ! And is he then destroy'd ?
Blasted my Son by angry lightning-flash ?
Up by the root from God's creation tore ?
Nor is transplanted to some kindlier soil ?
And Virtue then a shadow ? Heaven a dream ?

His

His life and mine in a delusion spent ?
 To this whole world the future give the lie ?
 Here Goodness smile ? Confusion there destroy ?
 Flat contradiction ! impious disbelief !
 Thy cordial drops into a Father's heart,
 Thy powerful drops, sweet Hope divine ! instill.

O God !

In all thy ways alike thy Goodness shines
 Clear in my faith ; tho' dark to mortal eye.

In pious equanimity serene
 Such arguments a Father found. I none ?
 Oft have I heard, oft from my Mother heard,
 That friendship is immortal. So my heart,
 My beating heart and upward eyes persuade.
 But friendship mutual is, or not at all.
 Therefore both parties live. Then lives my Friend.
 Who was his Father's Glory, Mother's joy :
 Of his Relations, Friends the dear delight :
 To me a faithful guide. Was, did I say ?
 Art still thy Father's glory, Mother's joy :
 Of thy Relations, Friends the dear delight :
 My guide thou art : still shalt be, Faithful Guide !
 Ah ! Cruel Air ! Of life and death alike
 The cause, if thro' thee fevers are convey'd.
 Where wast thou Wholesome Air ? For purer breath
 Thou could'st not fill ; nor play about a heart,

With

With sentiments more generous e'er inflam'd.
 Where wast thou then ? Sure not at thy command,
 Veil'd Modesty ! Or didst thou thy fair Charge
 Neglect ? Thou never didst thy Charge neglect.
 Did then the Nine, or some Angelic Choir,
 Join in request to the Almighty Lord ?
 Obtain ? And thee dispatch to rob the earth ?
 E'en this poor earth ? In Angels' bosom then
 Dwells envy ? Or is Heaven itself too, poor ?
 Or did ye mean to punish us mankind ;
 As if he was not here enough esteem'd ?
 Ah ! Ye mistook. We were not so ingrate.
 Him all who knew, or lov'd him, or rever'd :
 I, as a Father and a Friend, lament :
 In learning's school my Partner, Spur and Guide.
 If ye my words, nor these my sighs, believe ;
 Ask that Transparent Form, who on me smiles,
 And may'st thou ever smile, Sincerity !
 Into my tongue then, Modesty ! inspire
 Some tender, not despairing epitaph.

PHILOCLIS cineres infra Præconis IESU.
 Scripta legas : illum si vere agnoscere velles.
 Præclara illa quidem ! Sed quam præclarior ipse !
 Quem Deus innocuum juvenem summisque benignus
 Florentem studiis loca transtulit in meliora.

The

The MUSES Triumphant over VENUS. Or, The
Poetical Vision seen one Summer-evening beside
the River at ELGIN. A T A L E.

W H A T means this strange commotion? pleasing pain!
What this impatience fluttering in my breast?

This boiling blood, as it wou'd burst the veins?

These shiverings thick as those successive waves?

This leaping heart? These glowings? Bathing sweats?

Forehead uprising? Bristled hairs erect?

Eyes swollen, gushing into sudden tears?

Sight how confus'd! How lost! Or how transform'd!

Matter refining into thought. Thus you,

Blind Thamyris! and blind Mæonides!

And justly equal to 'em in renown

Thou, modest MILTON! Virtue's sweetest Bard!

Pure air who always, now how purer draw'st!

Ranging as here on Fancy's wing, th' Immense

Of various Beauty, there on thought intuitive,

Cou'd I to thee be——!

Ye venerable Names! forgive my tongue

Thus uncontroul'd, for what can thought controul?

As well you know; forgive my trembling tongue's

Presumption: did not you too, thus intranc'd

In heavenly, lose your mortal sight. These Forms

How

How beauteous ! springing from material things,
 As out of chaos rose that solar sphere.
 In thick procession fly these Images
 Ideal, yet substantial, fair, divine,
 Each faculty distending with excess
 Of rapturous joy. What may this phrenzy mean !
 Is it love, ye Muses ! or poetic fire ?

The Nine descending heard ; and with a smile,
 Fear not, dear Boy ! it is poetic fire.

Then towards me lower still the Heavenly Choir,
 Sweeping from south to north a round career,
 All over glowing fann'd me as they flew.
 Not to the parch'd and fainting traveller,
 Alone, despairing, if his eye dismay'd
 Wandering along the vast Arabian sands,
 Lights on some pool : to him not cooling draught
 Is so reviving as that sacred breeze,
 Your wings, ye heavenly Muses ! o'er me spread.
 Then up the ether sprung. My eye pursu'd
 Your rapid, ah ! too rapid flight away :
 My listening ear your wondrous harmony.
 Fix'd were my eye and ear : soon fix'd in vain.
 Ear first, then eye, as to the earth confin'd,
 My infirmity upbraided. Pensive sat

F

I long :

I long : and your departure, Muses! mourn'd.
 Ah! Pleasing transport! Glorious vision that!
 Ah! Why so transient? Why like lightning-flash,
 Why did ye, Muses! shine and disappear?
 I thought myself in your sweet influence blest.
 Why so indulg'd? Does Heaven then tantalize?

Long mourn'd my fainting powers, and sunk asleep.
 But from sleep's troubled chaos soon awak'd.
 When, lo! descending Queen URANIA alights,
 Towards me advancing moves with grace divine,
 Yet with an air, that still'd my blushing fears:
 Then, sweetest mildness softening her sublime,
 Nor letting my frail organs overpower;
 The Holy Nine do never those forsake,
 Who with a pure affection us pursue,
 With thee, O Virtue! our best gift inspir'd.
 Their strains, their sighs, from such ambitious zeal
 As all good spirits and ourselves approve,
 On circling waves float each way thro' the air,
 E'en into PLUTO's realm spread silence, awe,
 Self-hate, and wheresoe'er we are above,
 Reach our not undelighted ears, from earth
 Tho' come. Sometimes our music we suspend,
 Listening with ravishment. Or Chorus-like
 We catch, and swell your feebler notes aloft

Into

Into full melody thro' Heaven's concave,
Which rings, and makes immortal spirits blest :
Blest with the symphony, yet more the hope,
Their numbers to increase, tho' infinite,
Soon from your earth. For yon your mansions are,
Prepar'd. This cordial take. I drank. She flew :
And airy-sandal'd MERCURY dispatch'd
All that had pass'd to CUPID to relate.
CUPID enrag'd strait to the Cyprian Queen
Faster than e'er flew arrow from his bow :
Lights whining on her lap, Mama ! They've robb'd
Me. Who has ? and of what ? my Dear ! And stroaks
His feathers flat bedew'd with sweating rage.
URANIA, he said, or CLIO, or 'em all,
Were in the plot. What plot ? To rob my game,
Which long ago, dead as a sparrow dead,
I kill'd, and had it in possession fair.
You know, 'twas so. Be more particular.
Him that I talk'd of yesterday. You laugh'd ;
Yet not, as usual, thank'd this faithful bow.
But time was, thro' his heart this dazzling point,
Bright beams reflecting from your beauty, Ma'am !
I shot with all my might. Nor is it small ;
As men and Gods, e'en Jove himself well knows,
And shall know too. Say Muses, what they will ;
With whom we share the world, and better half

Will

Will have, Mama ! It split his heart in two.
The halves together hung, but by a thread,
Weak single thread. Too strong it prov'd, my Dear !
Mama too my misfortunes then deride ?
And to URANIA's join her cruel jeer ?
Smile at my wrongs, mock at her CUPID's tears ?
Patience, my Dear ! Cease, cease that piteous squall.
It tears my bowels. Know, the Gods, and We,
To Fate Inexplicable all submit.
And CUPID is a God. Yes, so I am.
And up he springs, and hugs her yielding breasts.
With head reclin'd she flatters in his ear,
Then to High Fate must CUPID too submit.
Too long, my Dear ! hast thou the knave mistook.
No more on bed of sloth he lies supine,
In hopeless love's soul-melting dreams dissolv'd,
Beneath night's sable curtain, or the rays
Of Sol, who smiles around, but cannot cheer
Without our gracious leave. Such once our power.
For other flame his heart has long possess'd.
And other wings, than thine, have bore aloft.
Come. The mysterious cause I'll now unfold,
Of thy diversion, and my vengeance due.
Why ne'er before ? Lie down. He fell supine.
With nectar'd linen soft his eyes, ears, face,
She wip'd, and look'd, and kiss'd his dimpled cheek.

Not

Not thee, sweet Child ! more than myself they wrong'd.

My vengeance thou unknowing execut'ft

As oft, so then. For prithee what offence

Against thy honour did he e'er commit ?

Me, impious from his childhood, he despis'd.

Yet lisping did the little urchin sing,

Above me raising SOPHIA forsooth,

Nay smile, fair Archetype !

Whence Jove his Venus form'd.

Such an affront to Majesty divine

Unpunish'd never fell from human tongue :

Nor ever shall. Severe is my revenge :

And love, a torture, with My Smile unblest.

Implacable yet none but PLUTO's rage

Of all the Gods ; and therefore I relent :

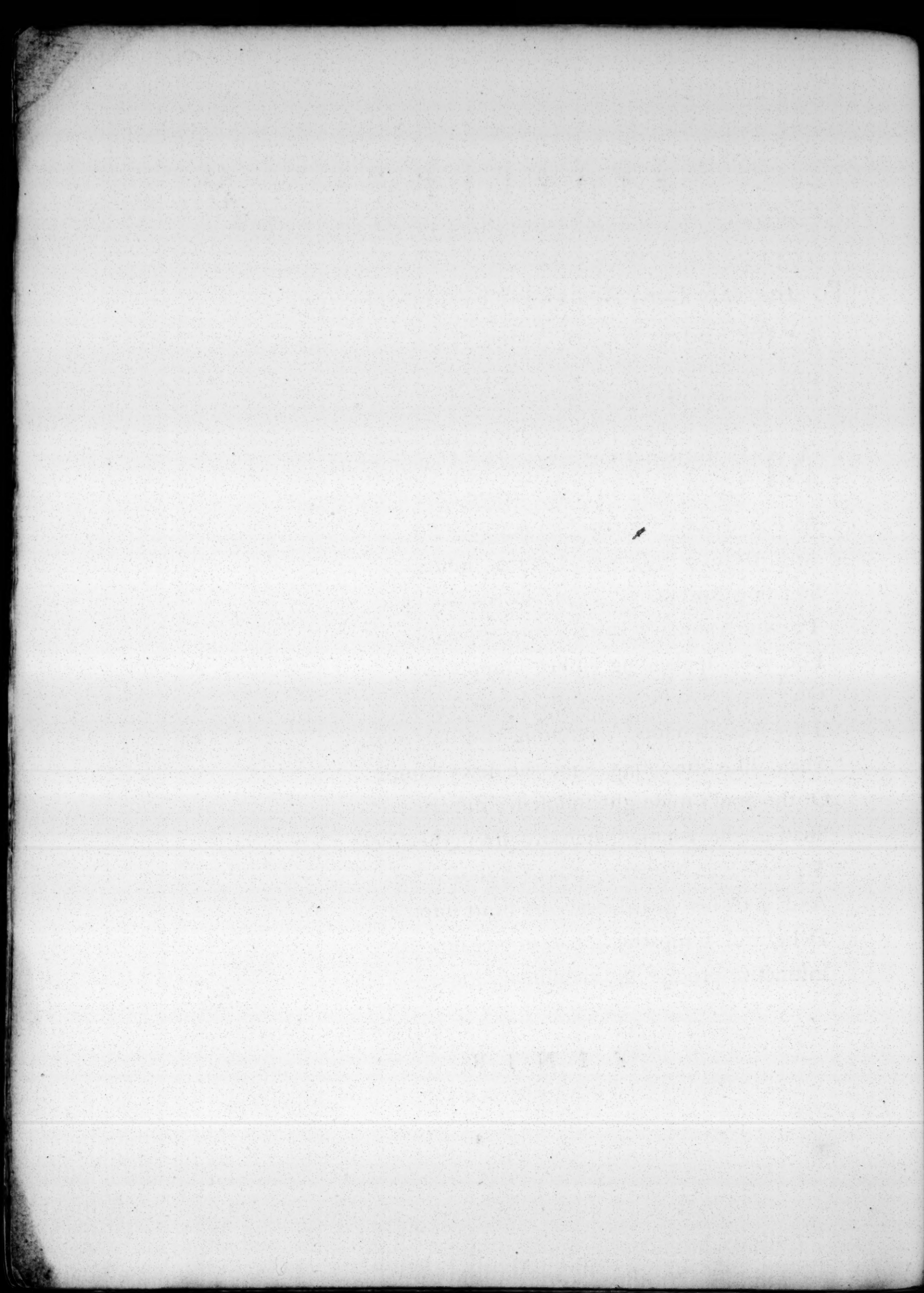
Since Fate will have it so. Let CUPID learn,

When his Mama forgives, he must forgive.

Tale ended, Mother preach'd. He drop'd asleep :

Nor, that I know, has ever since awak'd.

To



To the late Lord SHAFTSBURY's Ghost; spoken after the above Poems, before him early one Morning, in a Vision: An ODE.

MY Muse her fate from your decision waits.
Her talent, Sir ! tho' slender you'll approve,
As still devoted, Virtue ! to thy cause.
And Awful Virtue bids, Let that suffice,
Stopping Ambition's voice, yet not her sigh
To win APOLLO's laurel, your applause ;
For your applauding Smiles immortalize.
Oh ! Say, you hope at least, I may excell.
That friendly Hope, conspiring with my own,
Shall, like this rising Sun, the dewy damps
Of the Soul's midnight indolence disperse :
Shall to the zenith snatch my strengthen'd eye,
To view Fair Nature's universal glow ;
And with her genial heat my heart inspir'd,
Delightful sympathy ! shall to my lips
Instinctive prompt th' involuntary song.

F I N I S.

